(c) if so; the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI RAO INDERJIT SINGH): (a) In the Joint Statement, issued after discussion between Prime Ministers of India and Canada during the visit of Canadian Prime Minister, Mr. Paul Martin on 17-18 Januanry, 2005 to India, the two countries agreed to contribute expertise toward the creation of a tsunami early warning system for the countries of the Indian Ocean, in concert with multilateral efforts.

(b) and (c) The two leaders agreed to direct designated Scientific Advisers on each side to report on advancing S&T arrangements and encourage strategic collaboration in selected areas of science and industrial technologies. The two leaders also agreed to support a CEO Roundtable that would make recommendations for expanding economic ties, conclude an Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement and take additional steps contributing to greater investment and trade, including trade missions.

Most Favoured Nation Status to India

2539. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Pakistan has indicated that it is going to confer the Most Favoured Nation Status to India very soon;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) in what manner it would help India and Pakistan to cement bilateral relations and also to increase the trade between the two countries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI RAO INDERJIT SINGH): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Does not arise.

Trade with Latin America through Chile

2540. DR. ALLADI P. RAJKUMAR: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Chile has offered the Indian companies to use Chile as a Spring Board for entering Latin America; and

(b) if so, the details of steps taken by Government to grab the opportunity?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI RAO INDERJIT SINGH): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Government is motivating and encouraging our companies target Chile seriously for business and investment and use Chile as a springboard to other Latin American countries. The Government is working in this regard with the chambers of commerce and industry and export promotion councils under the Focus-LAC (Latin America and Caribbean) Programme.

SAARC Summit

†2541. SHRI R.S. GAVAI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that 13th SAARC Summit is going to be held soon;

(b) if so, the details of issues likely to be taken up by India in this conference; and

(c) the details of the agreements Government expect to be signed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI RAO INDERJIT SINGH): (a) In line with India's commitment to the SAARC process. Government of India have stressed our keeness to hold the 13th SAARC Summit in Dhaka at an early date. Pakistan, as Chair of SAARC, is required to initiate consultations with the host Government (Bangladesh) and other member countries for identifying fresh dates for the 13th SAARC Summit, which are mutually convenient to all SAARC members.

(b) India wishes to re-orient SAARC programmes towards specific project activities in key areas of economic and social development and regional economic integration, which can bring tangible benefits to the people of the region. India seeks to finalize modalities for the setting up of SAARC Poverty Alleviation Fund, to which it has offered US$ 100 million as contribution, for financing poverty alleviation projects in SAARC countries outsides India. India is also keen to promote proposals made at the

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.